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CHRISTIAN OBSERVER

AND
FREE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH.

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Christian Observer.

AND FREE CHRISTIAN COMMONWEALTH.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20, 1870.

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DR. DABNEY'S LETTER TO DR. VAN DYKE.

A pastor in Eastern Virginia says in a recent letter to the editors: "Dr. Dabney's letter is nobly written." Another excellent pastor in East Tennessee, writes under date of July 14th: "The paper of Dr. Dabney in your last is just the thing that I wanted. It gives me new light, and I'm grateful to you for its publication. Can't we have 5,000 or 10,000 copies printed and given to our churches? It seems to me it ought to be done, and poor as I am, I feel like pledging half the cost of 'publication.' In another letter from New York, the writer says: The paper with *Dabney on Van Dyke* came to hand and is making a noise. We want more of them. Can it be thrown in a tract form? I would like \$10 worth, and Colonel would like \$10 worth." It is now asked, "Can it not be published in pamphlet?" We answer, YES—and if those calling for it will immediately advise us what sums they will pledge for, 50, 100 or 500 copies, it shall be done as soon as practicable.

CONTROVERSY PREDICTED.

It has been predicted that there is to be much controversy resulting from differences of opinion, touching the course taken by our late Assembly on the Overture from the Northern Church for correspondence. The prophecy, we trust, is apocryphal. Not that we regard disagreement in all cases as an evil. Disagreement in opinion, and even controversy is refreshing, when two brethren discuss a given question and lovingly compare their views to find out the truth. But controversy is a wretched thing when it is merely an attempt to prove another wrong. We do not know of any one in our Church who wishes to engage in a debate of this kind.

Our Church has a far more important work in hand. As a Church, we occupy a wide and noble field—which, if duly cultivated, will yield abundant harvests. It needs many laborers. To speak without a figure, we need not only ministers—but more prayer—fervent, importunate prayer, more self-denying effort and larger offerings to the Lord's treasury to extend the blessing of a preached Gospel. And are there not thousands in the Church, who will practice self-denial and make far larger offerings to God than heretofore, in time and money as well as in prayer and effort, to aid the cause of Sustentation and Missions and every other evangelical work of our Church? With such work on our hands, we cannot afford time for controversy.

And in regard to our Northern brethren, we need not have any controversy with them. The only defence our Assembly needs touching its course on the overture for correspondence is a simple statement of facts—of the things done. This, we think, is the only argument required in the matter. And, we trust, that the misstatements that have been repeated will at length be corrected in the minds of thousands at the North. In the words of the *Southern Presbyterian*, "it is not true, as has been repeated over and over again—that the Southern Assembly rejected the overture for friendly correspondence with the Northern." This statement is not true, nor is it based on truth; and we will yet hope for unanimity enough connected with the North-

ern press to correct the misstatement. The overture was kindly and courteously received: the Committee sought for conference, was appointed; and that Committee is waiting, and no doubt ready to meet the Committee from the North, which was discharged shortly after the delegates returned, should it ever be re-appointed. And, we trust, that our Church, by "purity, by knowledge, by long-suffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honor and dishonor, by evil report and good report," will commend the spirit of peace and the truth to the Northern Church and to the world.

"WHAT IS TRUTH?"

Jesus did not answer this question when asked by Pilate, whose skepticism was noticed in our columns last week.

If a minister were to take this question as a text, some of his hearers would think it his duty to present a statement of the truth in the form of a few propositions. If a minister were to treat it in this way, "he might give his audience the poor fragments of the truth which his own mind could grasp and call it the gospel—the truth, and require his hearers to receive it on peril of their salvation."

Then they who lean on other minds would leave the church bigoted; and they who think would go home smiling bitterly, or perhaps sarcastically, doubting whether the truth can be found.

No, says the preacher; the answer to Pilate's question "cannot be compressed into a sermon," or into a few columns of a newspaper. No verbal form can give a full idea of the truth. Think you that if Christ could have answered the question in a few sentences he would have spent thirty years in witnessing to it? "The truth is infinite as the firmament above you. In childhood both seem near and measurable; but with years they grow and grow and seem farther off, and farther and grander, and deeper and vaster as God himself, till you smile to remember how you thought you could touch the sky, and blush to recollect the proud, self-sufficient way you used to talk of knowing or preaching the truth."

The truth in religion is a life—like Christianity itself. It is God's character, the Divine life in the soul. How can this spirit, character, life, be defined in ten words, or ten thousand? The truth which Pilate needed—which you want and I want, is not the boundless verities, but the truth of inward life. The perception of your relations to God, your spiritual poverty, and of the excellence, glory, and grace of Christ, faith in him as the light of the world, the only one that can guide me safely amid the darkness in the way everlasting and teach me "how to live and how to die."

How can you attain to the knowledge of this truth? It will require independence, humbleness of mind, action. Let no one imagine that independence savors of presumption. Romanists greatly err who think that Protestant independence is pride and self-reliance. It is in truth a deep sense of personal responsibility and a purpose to trust in God, and not in man. When walking among precipices and glaciers you choose your guide, but he will not carry you; you must walk yourself and use your own strength and tax every nerve to avoid the perils of the way. This is independence—decision of character without a particle of presumption or pride.

To know the truth requires HUMILITY. We must know that there is no infallibility in man; that we are not infallible, and that no council of men or angels can make one infallible. We may err in ourselves; we are all miserable sinners, destitute of all righteousness. This one thought is enough to keep us humble. Besides, "we are of yesterday and know nothing." And if God enlightens us to see his glory as it shines in the face of Jesus, even when thus taught, we but "see through a glass darkly," we know only in part, and in part prophecy. In this infancy of our being it becomes us to humble ourselves and receive the truth in its purity, just as God has revealed it.

Action is essential to a knowledge of the truth. This was Christ's rule for discovering truth. "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God." It is a plain, simple, a blessed rule, intelligible to all. Here we are in a world of mystery, where all is mystery and much is dark—where a hundred jarring creeds declare themselves to be the truth, some of which appear very plausible. How shall a man decide? Let him do the right that is before him. Though much is uncertain, yet many things are clear. Whatever else may be wrong, he knows it must be right to be pure, to be just and tender, merciful, and honest. He knows it to be right to obey and love God, to deny himself and love his neighbor. Let him do the will of God so far as it is known to him. There are many who say, "If I could be sure of what is truth; if I knew that the doctrines of Christ were in-

deed true, then I would cordially embrace them." Men wish to know before they act. God says no. Act—make your lives true; be earnest in all your life. Do the right that is known to you and "you shall know whether the doctrine be of God." It is by right action that faith is made strong and man is prepared to know the truth.

THE LOUISVILLE ASSEMBLY.

We have on our table several communications on the course adopted by the Louisville Assembly with reference to the overture from the Philadelphia Assembly for Correspondence. Most of our correspondents cordially approve of its action as courteous, manly, dignified, Christian. One, a very highly esteemed Christian brother, laboring on the borders, thinks with Dr. Lyon that our Assembly was not sufficiently courteous in its response; that it should have appointed a committee to consider the question of official correspondence without making any reference to the difficulties of the past. Another, who is also highly esteemed, and some of whose remarks we subjoin, also thinks the Assembly erred, but that its error was in exactly the opposite direction. He writes: "It seems to me that its proper course would have been that adopted by our Methodist friends at Baltimore when a similar proposition came to them from the Northern Methodists, accompanied too, as in our case, with delegates who expected to be heard on the floor of the Conference."

Our Southern Methodists seem to have better understood the parties with whom they were dealing and did not allow themselves to be drawn into an awkward position. They simply permitted the overture to be read and then in a few words as possible resolved that they were not prepared to take any step in that direction at present and thus dismissed the subject without even inviting the delegates to a seat on the floor or permitting them to address the Conference.

Such a course on the part of our Assembly would have been more simple and dignified.

It would have enabled us to present that masterly silence which has marked our action for the last nine years in relation to the Northern Assembly. But as the matter now stands they will iterate and reiterate their false statements until the Northern people who seldom see any of our papers will come to believe that what their editors tell them is all true.

As to instructing our committee and sending out a manifesto to enlighten the world in regard to our action and the reasons for it, it was simply useless. What does the world care about us, or our actions, or our views?

They stood aloof from us in the time of our sore trial and calmly looked on while our homes were desolated and our wives and sisters reduced to poverty. Now, if the fires of religion were kindled against us, we would be kindled against us with equal indifference. Our course then would have been a quiet tenor of our way, eradicating our own field and sowing either from the North or the portion of the outside world.

Our brother is evidently not aware of the bitterness, and rancor, and threats with which the exponents of public feeling in the Northern Methodist church resented the action of the Southern General Conference to which he refers. Their position was, "Come, brethren beloved, and be absorbed into our great and noble organization." The Southern Methodist church mildly but firmly declined. Then the response was a reiteration of charges as offensive as those made during the war. The Southern church was declared to be a thoroughly corrupt church—sanctioning the immoralities of free love, etc.; but it was threatened that as they had been whipped politically, they must and shall, as a church, adopt the notions of their Northern brethren. The action of our Assembly has provoked nothing from any papers of the Northern Presbyterian church quite as severe as the following from *Zion's Herald*, a Boston organ of the Northern Methodist church:

"The whole feeling of the Church South is yet hard and hot against the national sentiment. It adjourns to commemorate the Confederate dead. It puts Jeff. Davis in its platform, on its chief seat of honor, although it is so fearful of being entangled in side issues that it refuses to appoint a Committee on Temperance lest it may have to express an opinion on a question of morals. It will probably be equally averse to expressing its views on divorce, and free love—or would if these evils were popular in the South, as the last certainly was during the prevalence of slavery. Its whole feeling and conduct towards the people of color are the very opposite of ours."

"These differences run yet deeper. Their hearts are not as our hearts. They understand that, if admitted, they must accept our ideas and usages. Their own notions, on which they have prided themselves so greatly, must disappear, and the prevailing sentiments of the N. M. E. church will subdue all their hostile traits to itself. No persons know this better than the leaders of the Church South. If two ride the same horse one must ride behind. Messrs. Bond, Summers, McAnally, McForn, Marvin and other real leaders of that church have no desire yet to dismount their sorry secession nags, hazy and starved though they be, and mount behind the victorious steel which for years they mocked and sought to kill. They must be indulged in a little more bitterness of spirit and make one new attempt to regain the South to themselves."

Its refusal by the Louisville Assembly

to extend any courtesies to the delegates from the Northern Assembly would perhaps have provoked expressions as bitter in the Northern Presbytery as in the Northern Methodist church. An unqualified acceptance of their invitation would have fully developed the fact which Dr. Van Dyke plainly intimated that the Northern church had no purpose of admitting any wrong on their part in the past to be apologized for now, or to be guarded against in the future, and that this initiatory step towards union contemplated merely the absorption of our own body. The middle course, adopted by our Assembly, viz: the exhibition of every possible courtesy to the representatives of the Northern church, the assurance of none but kind and Christian feelings, and the acceptance of their invitation to a conference, guarding it by a candid statement of the difficulties that separate us—difficulties which could not be ignored—will probably prove to have been wiser than either of the extreme courses urged upon it.

OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

Bishops in Parliament—The Primate and Irish—Lay Preachers in the Established Church—A Union Mania in Ireland.

A motion was sought to be introduced to Parliament to relieve the bishops from attendance in the Upper House, but it was defeated by a small majority. The opinion is, however, gaining ground that the bishops are very indifferent legislators and ought not to be required to do Parliamentary work.

Some of them are also very unprotesting Protestants. Bishop Eliott wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury a few days ago requesting him call a meeting of the occupants of the Bench to record their protest against the dogma of infallibility proclaimed at Rome. Dr. Tait declined to do so at the request of the Bishop of London. He thought it would not be prudent or necessary for the Bench to meet with Rome at the present time. The Bishop's delicacy is puerile; but then the Bench has always been pretty tolerant of Rome and more so since his elevation to the Primacy.

Another bishop, Magee, of Peterborough, an Irishman, and a most eloquent speaker, is very anxious that his right to be a lay preacher should be persuaded of the necessity of employing lay talent on an increasing scale in the working of the Church. He publicly inducted a layman to the office of "Reader," and took occasion to enlarge on the "importance of the laity. He considered that they should be employed to hold prayer meetings, exhort, and even preach in all the parishes." None but the "parish church." None but the "parish church." None but the "parish church."

Methodism is very popular in Ireland, and he can recognize the fact that lay preachers are largely employed by the various branches of Methodism and hence he has been constrained to the conclusion that what is so useful under the control of the irregular ministry of Methodism, might be even more useful under the supervision of the regular clergy of the Established Church. Dr. Magee will possibly find, however, that lay preachers in general have not that reverence for regularly constituted ecclesiastical authority and prerogatives which he imagines them to possess, and they will be very impatient and restive, even under a bishop's influence unless permitted to exercise more privileges than Bishop Magee might be willing to allow.

Several influential dignitaries of the Irish Church (late established) are trying to devise measures for absorbing the Primitive Wesleyan Connexion of Ireland, and are also sanguine enough to hope, that the Irish Church will also absorb the Presbyterian. There is a regular union mania abroad everywhere—an inordinate desire to heal the divisions of Christendom by one organic uniformity. Its divisions may be healed more effectually by a less organic mode. Organic hugeness of operation would be too slow for aggressive effort. The number of sects might be reduced to advantage, and should, but they cannot be absorbed in one ponderous ecclesiastical organization. Much gladness possesses the heart of Presbyterianism here over the union of the two Schools in the United States, and Presbyterians hope that it may be the precursor of the union of all the Presbyterian bodies in the United States. If such a union could be effected without compromises unnaturally forced, and therefore, likely to produce irritations and inharmonies of heart and sympathy, which would likely work out further divisions, it would be very desirable, but otherwise it should be deferred rather than effectuated. If the desire for union which pervades the Northern ecclesiastical mind of the United States, was purged of its political element, it would be juster in its ideas and demands. A politico religious idea for union involves necessarily involves demands which Southern ecclesiastical bodies cannot consistently recognize nor respect. It is impossible for such men as Drs. Palmer and Robinson to entertain proposals

which imply needless submission—Dr. Cuyler, of New York, who is considered the most spiritual minded minister of the North, and whose writings are, without doubt, humid with the unctuous moisture of a spiritualized and spiritualizing sanctimony, is a rabid and violent political partisan. I see no reason why a minister should not be an ardent and enthusiastic patriot, but I see numberless reasons why his religious duties should not be modified and subordinated to his patriotic zeal, and why his fidelity to his Lord and Master should not be overridden by the excessive fervor of an ultra political partisan spirit.

ONCE A MONTH.

JULY 6TH, 1870.

LETTER FROM DALTON, GEORGIA.

Dalton, Georgia—A Railroad Centre—The Scenery Around—The New Presbyterian Church—Dedication Services—Sermon by the Rev. John Jones—A Growing Church.

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performs his Master's service, and with earnest zeal points out the narrow path wherein must walk the pure in heart. Gently he counsels and admonishes his little flock, and Sabbath after Sabbath he impresses upon their hearts the scenes that have transpired beneath the deep blue of Syria's heaven, and reverts again and again to the grand and controlling events which have thrown such a halo around Palestine. With pity and love he points out to them the dark valley and shadow of death, and the green pastures and still waters beyond, to which the Heavenly Shepherd leads all true believers.

Surely, his good deeds will live after him, and many stars will be added to his crown of glory. C. C. W.

DR. LYON'S SPEECH.

We insert in the "Literary Department" of this number, a corrected report of Dr. Lyon's speech on the subject of the Conference proposed by the Northern Assembly in regard to a correspondence between that body and the Southern Assembly. A synopsis of this speech appeared in our columns in connection with others, shortly after the adjournment of our Assembly; and we regret that the report then given was so imperfect, that Dr. Lyon in justice to himself felt constrained to reproduce it. We cheerfully comply with his request to place it before our readers; though, we think, the course advocated by Dr. Lyon and the minority on the question, could not have changed the result. Had the Committee been appointed without instructions, no correspondence could have been initiated; for it was very evident that the Northern Assembly on the return of its delegates from Louisville was not prepared in mind to disavow the opprobrious epithets and injurious charges against us on its records. It would not instruct its Committee how to meet or remove the difficulties in the way of Christian correspondence. It, therefore, dismissed its Committee.

THE EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE.

The London Christian World of June 17, says: "The arrangements are being matured at New York for the approaching meeting of the great Protestant Conference in that city, which is to commence on the 22d of September, and continue to the 2d of October. At this meeting, representatives from the Evangelical Churches in all parts of the world, are expected to be present."

It is yet too soon to speak definitely of all those, who may take part in the proceedings; but it is understood that the Rev. Dr. Stoughton is to address the Conference on the religious, spiritual, and ecclesiastical relations between the United States and the British Empire; Rev. Dr. John Cairns on modern infidelity; Dr. De Presense, of Paris, on the Ecumenical Council; Mr. Chas. Reed, M. P., on family religion; Dr. James McComb, on Materialism and Positivism; Dr. Davis, on Christianity and the press; Professor Wooley, of Yale College, on the constitution and government of the United States as related to religion; Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, on war and its prevention; Count de Gasparin on Christian philanthropy; Rev. Dr. Joseph Angus, of London, on vital union with Christ, the basis of Christian union; Rev. Dr. Steane, of London, on the present state of religious liberty in the different nations of Christendom; Rev. John Gritton, of the Lord-day Observance Society, London, on Sunday laws; Rev. Dr. Mullens, Secretary of the London Missionary Society, on missions among civilized and uncivilized nations; Rev. Dr. Charteris, of Edinburgh, on territorial divisions of missionary fields of labor; and Professor Tholuck, of Halle, Rev. Eugene Bersier, of France; Professor Revel, of Florence; Bishop Martensen, of Copenhagen; and Dean Kind, of the Grisons, on the state of religion in their respective countries. There will, in fact, be no lack of speakers or important topics; and the only difficulty will be to find time for all to be heard.

The arrangements for the Conference contemplate a voyage across the Atlantic at reduced fares. The Inman Ocean Line have offered to convey the ministers of the different denominations to New York and back for twenty-five guineas as first-class passengers, including everything, being little more than single fare, on the understanding that at least 150 tickets are taken. The sum of £2,000 will, it is thought, cover all the liabilities connected with the undertaking, toward which about £800 has been received and promised. Among others expected to attend the Conference, in addition to those stated above, we mention the Earl of Cavan, Lord A. S. Churchill, Sir H. Verney, Mr. W. S. Allen, M. P., Mr. Canalis, M. P., Mr. T. Chambers, M. P., Mr. R. N. Fowler, M. P., Mr. W. M'Arthur, M. P., and Mr. R. Smith, M. P.

Religious.

THE OLD QUESTION:
BAAL OR GOD?

A New York clergyman was recently put out of his church for drinking gin and milk with some reporters after his Sabbath morning's sermon; a tremendous hollabaloo was raised over his inconsistency by—the world.

A preacher of a fashionable church was recently seen at the Opera. The man is a worldling and the people took it easily. "What if our minister had been seen there?" said a Christian to a worldly member of a congregation whose pastor is a consistent man of God. "I should never go into his church again," was the reply.

It is a self-evident truth, that the world knows what a Christian ought to be. Hence, its sneers at the miserable shams of Christians, who, to-day, are frittering away their priceless time in dress, in sickish fashionable babble: at the theatre or opera; at dancing parties and at cards.

The world expects something widely different from the followers of Jesus. It expects a man or woman, who publicly consecrates a life to Christ and solemnly renounces the world, the flesh and the devil, to right-about face and march ceaselessly, steadily, firmly and unflinchingly along the self-same path which the once despised Master trod before them.

"What difference does it make what the world thinks?" is asked. A great deal, because, very decidedly Christians are to be the burning and shining lights in a world of darkness, and if they let the devil, maliciously snuff them out, they contribute the known quantity of their lighted area to the kingdom of darkness.

The average Christian example is pitifully weak. It would be far better to train a child in absolute normal worldliness, than to place it among professing Christians who dabble in creeds and confessions and church services, but whose essential life is drawn from that very world, which they profess in form to renounce. It is frightful to contemplate the distorted ideas of religion which thousands of young persons have at the present time.

Here is a Christian who takes his quiet "toddy" at home every day. He has a son ten or twelve years of age. After awhile, the very villainous smell of liquor is detected in the boy's breath. In a few years, he is seen to stagger. The end of the little story is apparent.

Here is a father, who keeps a billiard-table in his house. He has talked the matter over with Mr. B—, who is a church officer. B— laughs at the idea of their being anything wrong in it. He says he has one, finds it a fine thing for his boys, etc. So the billiard table goes in and the good angel goes out. He tells us that the boys have now, no inducement to play billiards down town: thinks it a capital investment. Perhaps, you go by that house late at night. The click of balls is incessant. They keep it up every night. It is a fascinating game. Studies are neglected, and about three hours are cut out of the body's rest. After awhile the boys go off to college, or remove to distant cities. Do they stop playing billiards? It is a ruling passion. They continue to play the innocent game. Where? There is a smooth way from those brilliant rooms, where you hear the repeated click of balls, to wine, to revel and to the women of the town. The devil knows it.

I asked a little boy once, in my Sabbath school class, why he did not study his lesson on Saturday evening.

"Mother, makes us all go to dancing school."

My heart sank within me—a Christian mother pushing her children into temptation, from which the teacher is seeking to lead them!

"They must be taught to be graceful." So the grace of a meek and quiet spirit is despised. So, lovely girls grow up to tread the meretricious steps of Salome, whose lascivious grace brought about the murder of a saint! So they grow up to find their pleasure in the dances, which unveil the sacred chastity of their sex and befoul the imagination with the slime of hell. "There cannot be any sin in it; no more than in walking." Ah! friends, where do you find the godly living, holy consistency; purity of conversation; happy religion? Among men and women who cannot meet together on an evening without tearing aside the distance which should lie between the sexes? No, never! and you know it.

Pass along the street where an opera house or theatre shows its blinding

light. Observe the crowd thronging through the doors. Ah! you see one and another of those with whom you came to the table of the Lord. They are flocking in, shoulder to shoulder with the vicious, the abandoned, the depraved, the worldling. That temple belongs to the world. Its pleasures are designed expressly to kill time. The devil means them to kill souls, and he does it. What are these Christians doing there? Jesus never goes there. It is the pleasure house of the world, the flesh and the devil. Are the opera and theatre-going Christians, those who are growing in grace and likeness to Jesus? Are they crucifying the flesh with the lusts thereof? "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world." Worldly Christians, does this touch you? "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world." "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world."

Does this cover the ground? It does: so completely, too, that you, very worldly Christians, have no loop-hole to get out of the way of its searching arm. Your position is unmistakably on the devil's side. It is the wrong side to be on in this fight and you know it. May God's Holy Spirit use these poor words, to make you stop just where you are and consider. Remember, God's heaviest judgments were written against His people, just for the simple reason, that "my people doth not consider."

For the Observer and Commonwealth.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

First Petition—"Our Father."

IV.—THE SONSHIP OF BELIEVERS.

"Our Father" teaches the sonship of believers and that they should address and think of God as Father. This is a precious truth and yet few, if any of the systems of theology make it specially prominent. We do not think that there is or can be any other than two systems of theology, the Calvinistic and Wesleyan, the former beginning with God, the latter with man. All others must be comprehended in these two, and if held as separate systems they are only patchwork whose parts are hung together without a support on which to fasten the whole. And even the Wesleyan stands on nothing. Grant its premise, or its foundation, the absolute freedom of the creature, and logically it will form a system that leaves the sinner just at an infinite distance from God, so far from him that he cannot touch him. There can be there no intercourse between God and the creature, much less can the creature claim to be a son. But this premise is the very thing that cannot be granted. It has no existence. Hence that system is like the Irishman's kettle—without a bottom. The Calvinistic system by making God its starting point has a bottom and a foundation no less solid than eternal truth. Hence step by step it approaches man and logically finds him "clay in the hands of the potter." God is the Sovereign Architect, the sinner is the material with which he builds. As a system it appears at first view somewhat cold, but it gets warmer as we contemplate its foundation, the Sovereignty of God, which is the rule of love. Yet this system, as also the Wesleyan, holds the sonship of believers in less prominence than some other doctrines that we consider of less importance.

It is true, and we rejoice in it, that God is a Creator, and a King, and a Judge; but it is not true that he is these separated from his fatherly character. He is the Parental Creator, and the Parental King, and the Parental Judge.

If the chiefest of parables teaches anything, it is that the sinner has to come, not to a Prophet, or Priest, or King, or Judge, but to a Father. And this model prayer of the Savior sets God forth only as a Father. Look at the contrast in approaching a King and approaching a Father. In the case of the former we must have on the livery of the court; we must be introduced by one of the highest officials: we must stand in the presence of the Sovereign as a poor subject or foreigner, unable to speak or act freely; bowing and scraping and exchanging the cold formalities of court; glad to get away again to be free to breathe the pure air and sunshine of heaven. In coming to a Father how great is the change. We may be in rags; we are going home: the Father is waiting and watching for us. In the distance he sees us, he runs to meet us, we fall on his bosom and rest in a father's love. There is nothing of the strangeness or formality of the

court; all is affection, home, sympathy, freedom. Thank God, Christ has taught us that this is the sinner's true relation to God, and that in coming to him we are not coming to a King who may take no note of our circumstances or petitions. We are not coming to a Priest to have him intercede for us; we are not coming to a Prophet merely to reveal things to us, or to a Judge to condemn us, but to a Father, loving, sympathizing, forgiving.

This the plain teaching of scripture that we are in deed and in truth children of God; believers are "born again"—born not of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of the Spirit of God. The second birth is as much a fact as the first birth. It is a new begetting. Not by our will or power, but by that of God. Believers, then, are children by birth, not by any legalism or judicialism as adoption, or a successful probation of six months of morality. It is not first heirs, then children; but first children, then heirs—heirs as the necessary and natural result of being children. If I am a child by nature there is no need that I should be one by adoption. By nature I have all the rights that I can possibly have by adoption. A child can be made heir to another man's property by adoption, but it can never be made that man's child. Christ was not made a son by adoption, or probation, he was generated; and yet believers are said to be joint heirs with Him. How joint? It is not by the union of a judicial declaration on the part of the sinner and a birth on the part of Christ. It is joint by its being a birth in both cases, Christ generated, the believer regenerated, begotten again by the Spirit of God. Hence the believer, by his second birth, has a right to a share in all the possessions of God. This leaves no room for a doctrine of probation or adoption. The word translated "adoption" is composed of two words, the one meaning son and the other to place, to constitute. Hence it correctly means sonship, to be constituted a son. Wherefore God hath predestinated believers to sonship, not "to the adoption of children," as it is badly translated. (Eph. 1: 5.) So God has given believers not "the spirit of adoption," but "the spirit of sonship," whereby they cry Abba, Father. An adopted child has not the spirit of sonship—the affection of a natural child; it cannot in truth cry, "Father." It is only the child begotten, that from the depths of its heart—from the instinctive spirit of its nature, can cry, "Father." And it is the privilege of believers to have the Spirit in them, the Spirit of Christ, not another spirit, not another nature. If the spirit of a believer's nature is changed and sanctified; but "adoption" or "probation" does not affect the nature or character, but only the judicial or legal relation. All that these can mean is secure regeneration, and secured in the true and dearer way. I make these remarks, not because I dislike the doctrine of adoption, but because I think these are the plain facts of Scripture and common sense, of which two things heresies appear to lack much. I want to stand related to God, not as a child of another nature, by legal adoption; but as His own child by His Spirit, and made heir, as the apostle teaches, by my relations as a child. First "children," then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ.

So believers are the born children of God, the natural heirs with Jesus Christ. God is their Father and Jesus Christ is their elder brother. From this relation flows all that is grand and glorious to believers. Regeneration excludes "adoption" and probation. Now for a few practical thoughts.

NORMAN.

THE SOURCE OF PULPIT POWER.
A writer in an exchange, impressed with the wonderful power exerted by the Rev. John Hall, D. D., of New York, has been studying this question: "How does he do it," and gives the following answer—

He surely has enough of the "physical basis." Never were the gown and cassock, to which he still adheres, or which still adhere to him, more amply filled. He is almost large enough to fill your idea of Penn, the Irish giant. But he is not a bit terrible. It is as though Mont Blanc were crowned with sunny meadows, for this is surely the kindest of faces that is above the great frame. How could the fairy stories represent giants as having terrible voices? Surely, there is none kinder than the speech of this great Irish doctor.

His words distil as the dew. His tender sympathy is felt from the beginning. His own soul is full—brimming full—of the truth he preaches. He has just one great, masterful source of power. It is what men call "unction." That is to say, he does not preach doctrine as though it were a briar-hedge,

intended to pierce all who are without; nor does he use texts of Scripture as missiles to hurl at his antagonists. What you feel is, that this great man loves with his great soul the things that he preaches, that they are his life, that he utters them with a grand and simple joy. We sat and listened to his exposition of one of the Messianic psalms, and we forgot to watch him critically any longer. As he went on talking of the Messiah in his great, child-like way, we did not, could not, criticise either his methods or the correctness of his exegesis. It may have been right or wrong; but we floated out on the tide of Christian sympathy on which the preacher bore us; we were critic no longer, we worshipped with him, and said, "My Lord and my God."

For the Observer and Commonwealth.

THE CHRISTIAN RACE.

Earnestness is essential to success in any profession or pursuit of life in which men engage. In nothing else is earnest effort so important to secure the desired end, as in the life of faith on the Son of God. Hence, the strongest language is used in the Word of God to fire the souls of men, and rouse their spiritual energies for the service of Christ, from the very incipency of a Christian life. "STRIVE, AGONIZE, to enter in at the strait gate." Why should one so strive? "For many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." The striving, required in the case is illustrated by a reference to the Isthmian games. In writing to the Church at Corinth, in allusion to these games, which were held on the Isthmus on which that city stands, he says, "So run that ye may obtain."

In these games, there was a prize to be won; a wreath of parsley encircled the brow of the victor. Just so in "the race that is set before us," there is a prize held out to our aspiring eyes, expressed frequently and in various language in the sacred Scriptures. There was in the Grecian races a course marked out, and laws were published for the regulation of the contestants, and no one was crowned except he ran lawfully. To gain the prize, it was not enough for a runner to outstrip his competitors, but he must do it according to the prescribed course and laws for the regulation of the contest. So we ought especially to mark that the most earnest and successful pursuit of Paganism, Judaism, Mohammedanism, Romanism, Unitarianism, or Universalism can never obtain heaven, simply because all theseisms do not set forth the only way of salvation revealed in the Scriptures. In these our Lord and Saviour says, "I am the way, the truth and life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me." And all Scripture testifies that faith in Him, repentance and holiness are essential to the Christian race.

Jesus Christ has many man who follow Him, but that did not run never obtain the prize. So in the Christian race many will fail, who do not acknowledge his public testimony, who, by a public profession of faith in Him, can have no doubt be saved. For the Christian race is for those who will not enter in at the strait gate. The 19th verse indicates that Christ was not to come, assuming pomp and the rude violence of an earthly prince, but this king was to be a Prince of Peace and humility, who should quietly organise a spiritual commonwealth not by imposing and noisy demonstrations and offering such vain inducements to selfish ambition, as the earthly conqueror present to men of influence to secure their adherence to his standard. But this new Prince is to seek the humble and lowly follower, and will call the poor vagabonds and beggars, and the highways and hedges to join his standard. Again the earthly conqueror seeks for men of stern hearts and fierce indomitable spirits, to further his warlike schemes. He has no wish to enlist the poor, weak and trembling soul, who can not lift a lance and wield a sword, while on the contrary, this Prince of Peace will take pity upon just such lowly spirits; and with great tenderness and care, he will incorporate them into his spiritual commonwealth and make them a part of the glorious church of which He is the head. Worldly princes with hard hearts and selfish natures, may despise and reject or even cast off such materials. But the bruised reed He will not break, and the smoking flax He will not quench. The primary significations of the words of this prophecy in their original language, is especially suggestive of the above interpretation. The word translated reed, means a species of water plant, which is quite delicate and tender, while the Hebrew word, the sense of which bruised but partially expresses, signifies broken without being entirely broken off. The Hebrew scholar will also recognise the word rendered smoking (or more properly feebly burning), as of kindred significance to one meaning very sad and desolate. So the sorrowing heart may with much comfort reflect upon the gentle love of the Saviour, who, although the reed may be very much broken and worthless, will not break it off, and though the spark of faith in the desolate heart be very feeble, and though the light burns with a sickly gleam; yet He will not quench it.

Then hope on, sorrowing penitent; The good Shepherd loves his feeble wounded lambs and will bear them home in his bosom. His great loving heart yearns with inexpressible tenderness after those poor weeping spirits who make their couches to swim with the tears of affliction. If the ray of hope is feeble, remember with gratitude that your merciful Saviour will not quench, but nurse the light of your faith. Jesus has a full sympathy with your sorrows, and beckons you on. Then lean more entirely upon him, and if Satan insinuates the dark suggestion that no true Christian would be as sorrowful as yourself smother it by flying to Christ. If your hope is feeble and faith weak; think for what would you be willing to part with it? what could persuade you to leave that Saviour whom you have so long been following in sorrow.

Do not regard yourself as a useless member of the body of Christ, as a crumbling, broken stone in the Master's building. Christ has a part for you to perform and will make you adorn the beautiful temple which he is erecting for his eternal glory. Rely upon it, Jesus has a work for you to perform. Christ chooses an office for each one of His elect, and every elect one for an office. Humbly following the Shepherd of the flock, faithfully discharging the duties of your sphere, and Jesus will glorify himself through even the bruised reed, and honor His name with the smoking flax, and when finally He in triumph brings forth his judgment or righteousness, to the great victory, with a joyful heart you will thank God "who doeth all things well."

W. D. M.

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

There cannot be a symmetrical growth of Christian character without sympathy and intercourse with the poor, especially the poorer brethren. What Christ did so much of, must surely form a part of our duty. One of his last and most significant lessons to his disciples, that of washing their feet and commanding them "so to wash one another's feet," was not so much to teach humility in the ordinary sense of the word, as to impress upon them a sense of willingness to do even the most lowly and troublesome service for each other. By nature we stand aloof from each other, and try to slip the noose of every menial office. But Christ came to reveal a love which must sacrifice ease, carelessness, and selfishness, to do kindnesses, and to perform even the lowliest services, if need be, for our brethren and each other.

Better to weave in the web of life
A bright and golden fling,
And to do God's will with a ready heart,
And hands that are swift and willing,
Than to snap the minute delicate threads
Of our curious life asunder,
And then blame heaven for the tangled ends,
And sit and grieve and wonder.

A Blessed Intimacy.

A friend once asked Professor Franco how he maintained so constant a peace of mind. "By stirring up my mind a hundred times a day," replied Franco. "Wherever I am, whatever I do, 'Blessed Jesus,' I say, 'have I a share in thy redemption? Are my sins forgiven? Am I guided by thy Spirit? Renew me; strengthen me.' By this constant intercourse with Jesus, I enjoy serenity of mind and a settled peace of soul."

MEDITATING ON THE TRUTH.

"I find it exceedingly difficult to keep my attention fixed, or to get my heart suitably affected, in reading and meditating upon truths which have become obvious and familiar by daily study; but there are times, when I find that while I try to muse on the subject, a fire as it were kindles, and contemplation terminates in adoring gratitude and admiring love. . . . I have found it advantageous sometimes to read the Scriptures with such exactness as to weigh every expression, and its connections, as if I were about to preach on every verse; and then to apply the result to my own case, character, experience and conduct, as if it had been directly addressed to me—not as a new promise or revelation, but as a message containing warning, caution, reproof, exhortation, encouragement or direction, according to my previous or present state of mind and my peculiar circumstances. . . . At other times, I have read a passage more generally, and then selected two or three of the most important observations from it, and endeavored to employ my mind in meditating on them, and to consider how they bore on the state of my heart, or on my past life, or on those things which I heard or observed in the world or the Church.—Rev T. Scott.

Advice to Ministers.

Do not scold. Do not abuse the faithful souls who come to meeting on rainy days, because others are too lazy to attend. Preach the very best you can to your smallest assemblies. Jesus preached to one woman at the well, and got all Samaria to come out to hear him.

Can't Find Time.

He who cannot find time to consult his Bible, will one day find time to be sick; he who has not time to pray must find time to die; he who can find no time to reflect is most likely to find time to sin; he who can find no time for repentance will find an eternity in which repentance will be of no avail; he who cannot find time to work for others may find an eternity in which to suffer for himself.—H. More.

Let your life be a pure evangel—seen and read of God and angels, though perchance unknown to men.

Home Circle.

"WHOSE AM I?"

"Tis a point I long to know;
Of it causes anxious thought,
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I His, or am I not?"

Mourner, why these anxious fears?
Wherefore shouldst thou doubtful be?
Christ, thine advocate, appears—
He has died instead of thee;
He thy punishment has borne—
Look to Jesus!—Cease to mourn!

"Oh I love, why am I thus?
Why this cold, this lifeless frame?
Can they be worse,
Who have never heard His name?"

Frames and feelings fluctuate;
These thy saviour ne'er can be;
May oft abate;
Learn thyself in Christ to see;
Then be feelings what they will,
Jesus is thy Saviour still!

PRAYER WITHOUT CEASING.

A sailor who had been long absent from his native country, returned home, flushed with money. Coming to London, where he had never been before, he resolved to gratify himself with the sight of whatever was remarkable. Leaving other places, he visited St. Paul's. It happened to be at the time of divine service. When carelessly passing, he heard the words, "Pray without ceasing," uttered by the minister, without having any impression made on his mind by them. Having satisfied his curiosity in London, he returned to his marine pursuits, and continued at sea for seven years, without any remarkable occurrence in his history. One fine evening, when the air was soft, the breeze gentle, the heavens serene, and the ocean calm, he was walking the deck, with his feelings soothed by the pleasing aspect of nature, when, all on a sudden, darted on his mind the words, "Pray without ceasing." "Pray without ceasing?" he exclaimed. "I think I have heard them before, where could it be?" After a pause—"Oh, it was at St. Paul's in London; the minister read them from the Bible. What I and do the Scriptures say, 'Pray without ceasing.' Oh, what a wish I must be to have lived so long without praying at all!" God, who at first caused him to hear this word in his ear, now caused it to ring up in a way, at a time, and with a power peculiarly his own. The poor fellow now found the lightning of conviction flash on his conscience—the power of the law shake his heart—and the great deep of destruction threaten to swallow him up. Now he began for the first time to pray; but prayer was not all. "Oh," said he, "I had a Bible or some good book!" He rummaged his chest, when, in a corner, he espied a Bible which his anxious mother had, twenty years before, placed in his chest, but which, till now, he never opened. He snatched it up, and it to his breast, then read, wept, prayed; he believed, and became a new man.

THE DEACON AND THE MILLER.

"Come," said the deacon to the miller, "what are you going to subscribe to our meeting-house? I'm round, you know, for subscriptions; and I take you are glad, for the sake of your growing family, that there's a prospect of our having a church and all the blessings that come in the wake of a church."

"Why, yes, I suppose I am, or ought to be," answered the miller; "but building a church is a great undertaking. Hadn't we better wait till we get more forehanded?"

"Can't afford to wait till then," said the deacon, "for nobody would ever get forehanded enough for that. The matter has been up before the people for some time, and they pretty generally have a mind for the work. You've thought it all over, I dare say. How much, neighbor, shall I put your name down for?"

"Well, I reckon I'll think more. We've lived so long without a meeting-house, we needn't hurry. I've got an expensive family, you know, and must look a little forward. However, I'll buy a pew when 'tis done."

"Ah, neighbor, I see how it is," said the deacon gravely. "Mind ye: 'when you grind your corn, don't give the flour to the devil and the bran to God.'"

The little church was built, no thanks to the miller. But his lukewarmness and evil forebodings of the matter so chilled his family, that they felt no interest in taking a pew when it was done and a sale of the pews took place. However, the brave little band of men and women who did build it, laying every stone and rearing every rafter in faith and prayer and self-sacrifice, were owned and blessed of God. He sent His Spirit down upon their sons and their daughters, and there was a great spiritual ingathering into the little church with gladness and great joy.

Again the deacon called upon the miller. "Well, neighbor," said the deacon, "I want you to come to our meetings; they are good."

"I don't know about so much meeting-going," said the miller gruffly. "Religion don't all consist in meetings, I reckon."

"No," said the deacon; "but a person who loves religion will love to go to the house of God."

"That's not certain," returned the miller shortly.

"You believe in religion, don't you, neighbor?" asked the deacon.

"Of course, and I intend to serve

God before I die. As soon as I can ease off from such a power of work on hand, I mean to 'tend to the business of religion, I and my family," said the miller with an air of dignity.

"Ah, neighbor," said the deacon, "see to it that 'when you grind your corn, you don't give the flour to the devil and the bran to God,' as too many folks do to their own undoing."

Time passed on, bringing cares and crosses to the miller. His sons troubled him; his wife died; his affairs went wrong. To make bad matters worse, he took to drink, and after a while his mill and grist went for debt. A little farther on, and he died a drunkard's death: his wild, hard, spendthrift sons scattering to parts unknown.

H. C. K.

The Memories of Childhood.

Make it pleasant and joyous for your children to remember the days of their early childhood. Grant them in their infancy every innocent pleasure, without fostering the spirit of selfish indulgence. We have often felt our temper rise, to see how carelessly their little plans are thwarted by older persons, when a little trouble on their part, would have given the child pleasure, the memory of which would last a lifetime. Don't think a child a hopeless case, because it betrays some very bad habits. Sympathize with them, that sympathy may strengthen and invigorate them to bear with firmness the trials they meet.

SPEAK GENTLY.

Speak gently!—it is better far
To rule by love than fear—
Speak gently!—let not harsh words stir
The good we might do here!

Speak gently!—Love doth whisper low
The vows that true hearts bind!
And gently Friendship's accents flow,
Affection's voice is kind.

Speak gently to the little child
Its love be sure to gain;
Teach it in accents soft and mild—
It may not long remain.

Speak gently to the young, for they
Will have enough to bear—
Pass through this life as best they may,
'Tis full of anxious care!

Speak gently to the aged one.
Grieve not the care-worn heart;
The sands of life are nearly run,
Let such in peace depart!

Speak gently, kindly to the poor.
Let no harsh tone be heard;
They have enough they must endure,
Without an unkind word!

Speak gently to the erring—know,
They may have toiled in vain;
Perchance unkindness roared them so:
Oh, win them back again!

Speak gently! He who gave His life
To bend man's stubborn will,
When elements were in fierce strife,
Said to them: "Peace, be still."

Speak gently!—'tis a little thing
Dropped in the heart's deep well:
The good, the joy, which it may bring,
Eternity shall tell.

HOW TO BE CHARITABLE.

"Sarah Simmons is charitable," said one sister to another as they sat and sewed. "If every visit to the poor could be a round in her ladder to heaven, I am sure she would climb high."

"I should pride myself upon it, I am afraid," said the other, "if I did half the self-denying work she does."

"If it is Christian to pride one's self on anything," remarked uncle Henry, looking up from his writing-desk.

"Yes, uncle Henry; but how can one help being pretty well satisfied with one's self who spends so much time among the poor as Sarah Simmons does? If I were as charitable, I should think I was fit to be a saint."

"Then I'm afraid it would not be Christian charity," answered uncle Henry. "If we give but a cup of cold water to the humblest of our brethren, it should be done in Christ's name. And perhaps the need of our remembering this is greater than we are apt to imagine. There is something so delightful in kindness, so exceedingly sweet in the consciousness of having done good to others, and in receiving the return of their grateful love, that I am afraid our charity is very often unsanctified. We think only of our suffering fellow-men, without remembering who it is that presents himself in their persons, to plead for our love; we do not see enough of Christ in those who need our charity; we do not see enough of God in our ability to relieve them. For what have we that we have not received? and that which we give them we are not the owners of; we are only the stewards of God's bounty. Whenever we give, or whenever we show kindness, without thinking of God, the consequence is evil both to ourselves and to others."

"I don't see how that is," said both girls at once.

"It is evil to others," continued uncle Henry, "because, thinking that whatever kindness we show we had a right not to show, we soon become satisfied with what we do, and even indulge sometimes perhaps in a little ill-humor and neglect on the strength of what we have done."

"The harm to ourselves is, that forgetting our Master, what he has done for us, and what he asks of us, we compare ourselves with ourselves, and then are easily enough contented with our progress. Little things become magnified when the scale is so minute; we are pleased with our good qualities, when, should we try our hearts and motives by Christ's law, we should find

how little room there is for self-satisfaction, for we should quickly see how much more of selfishness we have than love; in a word, how little goodness there is within to please our vanity or flatter our pride."

REPROVED BY A CHILD.

It was Saturday night, and I sat with baby on my bosom, and a book in my hands, so absorbed in its interesting pages that the numerous cares which had been circling around me were forgotten. My little boy of four years came from the bathroom, and dropping on his knees before me, commenced his evening prayer. I knew that he had entered my chamber, and was half-conscious of the object of his kneeling position, and yet so absorbed was my mind in the book, that it was not diverted therefrom until the little brown head was raised, and two large blue eyes looked solemnly up, while in a slow tone, all weighty with reproof, he said, "Do you know that I am praying to God, mother?"

I dropped the book, laid my hand upon the bowed head, and holding the little clasped hands as usual, listened with an humble spirit, while my little son lisped forth, "Our Father." When he had kissed "good-night," and gone to his pillow, there was a shade of sadness on my heart, and it had no relish for the volume before me: for my thoughts dwelt upon the inattention of myself and others when prayer is offered to heaven. How often at the family altar, at the prayer meeting, and Sabbath worship, while one is voice for many, does the mind wander, and few, very few, heart desires rise up with the offered petition.

"Do you know that I am praying to God?" Reader, may not those reproving words of a little child sometimes strike with force across your heart? Sometimes he a "flaming sword" to turn back your wandering thoughts, and direct them to Him who requirer heart worship! Happy for us if we so "apply our hearts" as not to deserve the reproof which fell from sacred lips: "These people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."—Household Reading.

Doing God's Will.

Do little things as if they were great, because of the majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, who dwells in thee; and do great things as if they were little and easy, because of His omnipotence.—Pascal.

PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITY.

"Papa, if I do all you tell me to do, will God love me and let me go to heaven?"

It was thus that my little boy of seven summers questioned me—abruptly, without warning, without premeditation on my part.

What answer could I give? I looked upon his young face and saw the earnest, thoughtful waiting for a reply which should satisfy alike the craving of his affection and the promptings of his conscience.

"Yes, my son," I answered slowly, for I was tempted to make a mental reservation with the words—"if I tell you to do what is right."

The bright look which the boy flashed upon me showed that he was satisfied, but the question had moved me greatly. I thought how great was the responsibility devolved upon us who are parents. These little ones not only ask us for gentleness and unwearied care and love, but they say, "Show us what is right; teach us how we may find the truth." We send them to school and entrust them to masters and tutors, that they may be instructed in the rudiments of knowledge. We take them to church with us because it is seemly so to do, and because we wish them early trained in the knowledge of God and in reverence for His service. Yet they come to us from their books, come to us even from the House of God, and nestling by our side, exclaim—"Do you tell us what to do." We cannot put them away. We cannot say, "Go to your Bible, let that be your guide," for they are only putting together, with faltering speech, the few and simple words of their first lessons in reading. We cannot say, "Go to the open book of nature, and on its fair pages read the wisdom and goodness of God." That is the food of the strong, not of children. We are their interpreters. We are to provide nourishment that may appease the hunger of their moral nature. Their education must begin at home by the fire side, at the family altar.

What watchful, faithful care will be required at our hands.

What wisdom will be needed, that our teachings may mingle strength and tenderness—and that the principles which are to determine the character and secure the happiness of mature life, may have a strong and durable foundation.

With what vigilance must we hold our own passions in check, and so regulate our daily walk and conversation, that the unspoken lessons of our example may give strength to precept, and indelibly impress a reverence for whatever is true and good.

How constantly we need the aid of the Holy Spirit that our hearts may faint not—and our intelligence falter not in the performance of a duty whose consequences are infinite.

Think of it ye who are parents, and when your child stops from its play, and with a face glowing with a new light from within, rests his soft hands upon your firmer clasp, and murmurs, "tell me what to do, teach me where to go," may God give you grace to lead him to the "open path" and the "shining light."—S. W. Presbyterian.

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Accrued Interest on Bonds, 128 53

and other Investments, 128 53

Bills receivable secured by Real Estate, Bonds, and Stock Collaterals, 4,572 22

Premium Notes, 175,733 32

Individual Accounts, 884 46

Furniture, 2,553 93

Deferred Premiums, 7,273 28

Premiums in hands of Agents and in course of Collection, 30,819 37

\$529,926 80

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Capital Stock, \$191,500 00

All other Liabilities, 3,576 14

Losses unpaid, None

Surplus, including reserve, 334,850 66

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LOUISVILLE, KY.
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Literary and Miscellaneous.

WEDNESDAY, JULY 20, 1870.
Volume 49.—Number 29.

The Observer.

THE OLDEST AND NEWEST EMPIRE.

The following paragraphs are from the introductory chapter of an important work on China and the Chinese, which the National Publishing Company will shortly issue in Cincinnati and Chicago. The subject is one of growing popular interest to our country. We copy from the advance sheets sent to us by the publishers.—Eds.]

The Chinese Empire was planted in the earliest generations after the renovation of the world and of human history, by the Deluge. Assyria, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, have risen and gone; their pride, their wealth, their dominion, all are things of the past. But the Chinese race is still the same, scarcely tinged by the admixture of others. The primeval religion, customs and literature are still vigorous and fresh. Virtuous examples of their own ancestors who lived four thousand years ago encourage the generation of to-day. School-books prepared by a contemporary of the Jewish prophet Daniel are yet the manuals of the teacher of children. The language is the unchanged monosyllabic of the infancy of mankind. The social usages are those which have been made familiar to us in the patriarchal pictures of the book of Genesis. We contemplate, amidst all the ruins time has wrought elsewhere, such an empire with constant amazement and curiosity. And when we behold at length a change in the wind of time beginning to blow the seeds of this stupendous ripe tree across the waters, so that they are seen taking root in our new virgin soil, the study of its whole character becomes to us a subject of such interest as has few parallels to it. We are the newest, as China is the oldest, empire of the world. Our institutions are but the raw experiments of yesterday. We are only beginning to realize that we have a national life, and that God has formed it for some great commission, the mere alphabet of which we are just learning to stammer.

The nations of the West boast of their greatness; but how paltry they seem in the eyes of an inhabitant of that venerable empire! And is this pride with out foundation? It alone, in Asia—and many Chinese know this—is equal to the whole of either of the other continents of the world in the number of its people. Bawling as it is to our ideas, there can be no just exception taken to the computation which makes its population to amount to one-fourth of the entire family of man. It stands first of all existing nations in agricultural production, first in some important manufactures, first in the sum of the wealth of its subjects. To one who can bring his mind to measure what the statements of others seem almost a world of itself—a world which, like those strange binary stars which revolve about each other and communicate mutual powerful influences, but are each a distinct sun, has moved in all time, strangely connected with, yet separate from, the world of our ancestry and history.

Interesting as China may be to the other nations of the world, it is related to ours and to our continent by ties far closer than to any others. The first and the last find themselves most nearly allied.

CHINESE IMMIGRATION.

The subject of Chinese immigration to this continent is one of unimportance and interest which language can hardly exaggerate. The reader of history beholds in this contact of the populations of America and China, on the shores of the Pacific ocean, the termination of that westward course of empire which began in the first periods of the history of man; and in it the completion of one great cycle of the Divine government on earth, and the commencement of another—the glorious and golden age of mankind. The philosophic mind finds abundant material for the profoundest thought in the numerous questions of a political and social nature which arise from the return of the grand current of civilization, transformed by all the changes which so many ages and influences have wrought, and freighted with the spoils of so many lands, to the regions whence it originated; and in considering the results as they will affect the nations which hold that civilization in its oldest and in its newest forms, the chief empire and the chief republic of the world, the patriot must speculate upon the effects of the introduction of a new and boundless supply of productive labor, of mechanical skill and of commercial enterprise, as they shall tend to settle the national embarrassments which have followed our employment of the African race; as they may prove useful in developing the resources of the western portion of the continent, and elevating it to a full level with the eastern portion; and as they may modify our institutions and possibly even our form of government.

The Christian must watch with deepest concern the infusion of new, subtle and powerful elements of religious error and forms of vice amidst the more bold and unregulated mind of our nation. And the man who waits for the consolation of the Israel of the latter

days must praise God for the new form which His almighty power has given to the immense work of regenerating the continent of Asia, through the multitudes of its people to be brought hither, enlightened with Christianity and returned to it again. Taken in whatever aspect we will, the coming of the Chinese to America is excellent in importance by no other event since the discovery of the New World. It is one of the impulses, beyond all human conception or management, by which God is moving the history of mankind onward to its great consummation.

For the Observer and Commonwealth.

THE HEBREW COMMONWEALTH.

Look on the race of man and behold what ruins, especially in that which he has fondly hoped would live the longest, I mean national life and government.

Still the work of Moses stands; the Hebrew nation obeying his laws still exists, and though disintegrated as a nation, separated by time and country, exposed to every agency of destruction, living by sufferance in the midst of bitter enemies, trampled on, scorned, trodden under foot, banished, proscribed, massacred, they still live, as much a people, as thoroughly one in every respect, as enduring and likely to endure, as firm in faith, as fixed in purpose, as vital in any part, as when the united tribes under Joshua marched through Jordan to take possession of the promised land.

Now, all this is due to these laws of Moses, for out of a tribe of herdsmen he made a nation, and but for him and his ordinances this people would have been scattered and mingled with other nations, just like any other mass of nomads under similar circumstances of national disaster. I propose to investigate these wonderful ordinances, and find wherein their strange power consisted, to mark the difference between them and those of other legislators, who have all more or less failed in giving permanency to their work, and chiefly to show how near and yet how far we are from following them in our own laws, customs and practices. I have even held that we Anglo-Saxons—men of the Bible—are nearer the Jews in many respects, by our adopting their Holy Writings as a living rule or daily faith, than any other ancient or modern people.

What is the Hebrew Commonwealth? This is not to be considered merely as an abstract question. It involves not only all religion, which is the true root of the whole matter, but all law, government and art; in a word, everything that goes to make up what we call civilization. I consider the march of Moses as the grand event in the history of the human race. Into it all previous knowledge and civilization flowed to aid in developing and rendering it perfect, and from it has sprung forth all that was good, then and since, in religion, government, and social life.

Before speaking, however, of this wonderful life—this marvelous march and its results—I must speak of the mighty men who preceded him and of the form and manner of religion as practiced by the patriarchs.

Religious Dispensations.

We speak of two dispensations—the Hebrew and the Christian; we speak of the Mosaic law as distinct from that taught by our Lord and his apostles; and we utterly ignore the long race of patriarchs from Adam to Abraham, or rather Moses, who worshipped God in spirit and in truth according to light given them directly by God himself.

I think that we speak wrongly here. There are really three dispensations: The first, the most ancient, patriarchal, from Adam and Noah to Abraham and to Moses; the second, the middle, Hebrew, or Mosaic, from Moses to the time of our Saviour; and third, the present, or that of Christ and his apostles. The Hebrew was as a bridge between the two; religion, which had been as wide-spread as the race of man, was narrowed down to one nation, thrown as a bridge across a time of darkness and danger, to be again expanded by our Lord's followers and to be again as broad as humanity itself. Yet the new is surely a true revival of the old, expanded and developed, merging the middle one into it and then all becoming one.

The whole world was on one side under Adam and Noah. All the world will be on the other under Christ and the apostles. The Hebrew system stood between, uniting both, and yet in many respects distinct from either. Now this distinctiveness of the Hebrew dates not so much from Abraham as from Moses. He made the nation and set them apart from all other people of all other countries. The God of Abraham is the God of the Christian, of all men who believe in the faith of Abraham. The God of the Hebrews seems to be (yet is not really) a national God.

Now, our Lord would seem to have been a Restorer. God was then on each side of the Hebrew dispensation; and God, through Moses, in the middle dispensation also. Why God separated himself as it were from the rest of the world and put him-

self and his worship into one family and one nation, we know not.

We do know, however, that he thus specially revealed himself and made known his power and love in a peculiar manner, and kept distinct and pure the knowledge of his name and a true faith. For this mighty work of separation and distinct expression Moses was appointed. Before his time man did receive a communication from God and offered him pure worship. He, first, however, was allowed and directed to write down these communications to preserve them as guides in matters of faith, and to organize and set in order a system of worship. This was his distinct duty, and the nation whom he led and created was appointed to preserve these holy writings and keep up these forms of religious worship.

This was the mission of the Hebrew on earth, and he still lives and must live to the end of time as a living witness of the truth that God gave his Holy Spirit to enable man to write out his Divine law.

Every Jew now gives testimony to the fact that Moses lived, was inspired of God, taught the law, governed the people, formed their worship, predicted the Messiah, and served God.

Every Hebrew now is as much a proof of this march of Moses as if he had been one of those born in the wilderness, who passed through Jordan and besieged Jericho. The world cannot do without this nation of witnesses. And what they have endured is due to the laws and regulations still obeyed by them as implicitly as of old (of their inspired lawgiver).

Hence the permanence of the race and hence also their importance in human history.

No other nation has such a beginning, no other people ever so distinctively arose from the will and works, the words and deeds of a single man as this Hebrew people. All other legislators all other nation-makers sink into insignificance when compared with him. Lycurgus, Solon, Romulus, mythical as they are and yet real too, as are nothing contrasted with this shepherd of Israel. Their works had merit and they endured for a time, yet where are they now and where the result of their lives and works? Houses built upon the sands of time swept away by the rushing waters of the ages while his work stands firmly based upon that enduring rock, firmer even than the solid foundations of the earth itself.

Its foundation was God; its laws were based on the God-made elements of man's best nature. It has in it the very endurance of eternity. It will live as long as man exists.

We often mistake, we say that God chose the Hebrew to be the depository of his law. He chose him to be the depository of his law, and would, by the way, that his very stiff-neckedness had been to last, more and higher, than any other people's to continue to exist.

We forget that God made him endure, that he formed him, that he selected them, that he created agencies and adapted them to ends. He gave Moses wisdom, and the laws of Moses, by being observed, created the very endurance of the nation, which has made the Hebrew a perpetual witness for God.

They had in themselves no more power to remain existing than any other people. Their life is in their observance of law, and failing this they perish like every other nation under disintegrating circumstances.

We see it in the fate of the Ten tribes. They failed to keep up Mosaic law and they perished like any other scattered people. Much time and study and learned wit has been wasted to prove that these tribes still exist somewhere. The Nestorians, the wild Indians and others have been fancifully found to be the men of these lost tribes.

Men see that the Jews endure and therefore they think that endurance is such a Hebrew characteristic that these people must be somewhere now.

Endurance was no more a Hebrew power than that of any other people; they live because they observe Moses' laws; if they disobey they perish and are wanting in history. The very destruction of the Ten tribes is a proof in itself of the permanence of these life-giving ordinances. To obey is to live; to neglect is to suffer; to disobey is to perish. This very endurance of the nation, obeying these laws, is a proof that the laws are divine. All that other men made died of age and disease. What this man made abides in life continually. He said that his laws were divine. The result of ages, the long trial of time has proved his assertion true. Of all miracles this race is in its perpetual existence the longest and the strongest. Moses wrote, the Jew lives; no prophecy has been and none is more completely fulfilled; no better refutation of the sceptic's no stronger proof of the truth of the bible can be found than this permanent existence of the Hebrew nation. I am willing to base my faith in God on this alone. I have no other evidence of the existence of God and the truth of his holy word.

OUR CHILDHOOD.

BY GEORGE D. FRENCH.

"Tis sad, yet sweet to listen
To the soft wind's gentle swell,
And think we hear the music
Our childhood knew so well;
To gaze out on the even,
And the boundless fields of green,
And feel again our boyhood's win
To roam like angels there!"

There are many dreams of gladness
That cling around the past—
And from the tomb of feeling
Old thoughts come thronging fast;
The forms we loved so dearly
In the happy days now gone,
The beautiful and lovely,
So fair to look upon.

Those bright and gentle maidens
Who seemed so formed for bliss,
Too glorious and too heavenly
For such a world as this:
Whose dark, soft eyes seemed swimming
In a sea of light and life,
And whose locks of gold were streaming
O'er brows so sunny bright,

Whose smiles were like the sunshine
In the spring time of the year—
Like the changeful gleams of April,
They glowed every year!

They have passed—like hopes—away,
And their loveliness has fled!
Oh, many a heart is mourning
That they are with the dead.

Like the brightest buds of summer,
They have fallen with the stem;
Yet oh, it is a lovely death
To fade from earth like them!

And yet the thought is saddening
To muse on such as they,
And feel that all the beautiful
Are passing fast away!
That the fair ones whom we love
Grow to each loving breast
Like the tendrils of the clinging vine,
Then perish where they rest.

And we can but think of these,
In the soft and gentle Spring,
When trees are waving 'er us,
And the flowers are blooming;
And we know that Winter's coming
With his cold and stormy sky,
And the glorious beauty round us
Is budding but to die!

CHURCH COUNSELY.

Before we were born, the reverend father of the writer came to this country. He entered the great city and on the Sabbath went to the great church of the city, and was coldly shown to the pew under the gallery, near the door. At once he felt that this was his plain apparel and humble place, and determined never again to use himself to a like discourtesy.

Following Sabbath he became a member of the church, and went through the streets, and night after night from God. Accidentally, passing along John street, he entered a church there, and entered with them; and he felt that this was his plain apparel and humble place, and determined never again to use himself to a like discourtesy.

Following Sabbath he became a member of the church, and went through the streets, and night after night from God. Accidentally, passing along John street, he entered a church there, and entered with them; and he felt that this was his plain apparel and humble place, and determined never again to use himself to a like discourtesy.

A POINTED ARGUMENT.

Dr. Mason Good once asked a young scoffer, who was attacking Christianity on account of the sins of some of its professors:

"Did you ever know an uproar made because an infidel had gone astray from the path of morality? The young man admitted he had not. 'Then, you allow Christianity to be a holy religion, by expecting its professors to be holy; thus, by your scoffing, you pay it the highest compliment in your power.'"

People are not surprised when they find a rejector of the Bible living in immorality; but let them detect a man who professes to obey it pursuing a sinful course, and forthwith, with sneers and scorn, they publish his "inconsistency." What a condemnation they thereby write against themselves! They see that Christianity requires purity of life in its adherents. They ensure those who fail to conform to its requirements. Because of that failure, they excuse themselves from obeying it. Yet they know that it condemns the inconsistencies of professors as strongly as they do? Will the sins of disciples excuse them? Did the treachery of Judas lessen the guilt of the Jews and Romans who killed the Lord? It is a tribute to the divinity of the Gospel, that it has triumphed over the stabs which it has received from its recruits. Nothing but God's truth could have survived such treachery. But that does not justify either the man who thus wounds it in the house of its friends, or the bitter enemy who makes it responsible for the wounds which are inflicted.

"A Snuday given to the soul is the best of all means of refreshment to the more intellect."—Isaac Taylor.

"I Ought to Have Anticipated This."

A few days have passed over the grave of a noble young man from whose lips fell these words. He had well represented the grand enterprise of life insurance, but neglected his soul. When the physician informed him that his sudden and severe illness was fatal, and his time on earth very brief, he said, with the deliberation of a deep and awful conviction, "I ought to have anticipated this; but now it is too late."

A MINISTERIAL ERROR.

It is, I think, an error into which many of our modern ministers, whose education has been carried to a high pitch, have fallen, that everything is to be done by the head rather than heart. We know very well, that the true method is to reach the heart through the head, and men must be made to feel by being shown why they should feel, and what it is to make them feel. But in many cases, especially in the least educated, the head is to be reached by appeals to the heart. We often hear the remark: "Yes, it was a smart sermon, but wanted heart. It sparkled like the stars, or shone like the moon on a wintry night, but it warmed no one." I have been sometimes struck, as every one must have been, with the varying effect produced by different speakers at a public meeting; and how much more the object of a meeting has been accomplished by a few gushes of simple eloquence from the heart of some earnest and ardent advocate, than by the elaborate, but passionless pleader. The latter was coldly admired, and admitted to be an eloquent speaker; but the former melted and moved his audience by the depth and intensity of his own feelings.—James.

Influence.

"Remember the power of indirect influences—those which distil from a life, not from a sudden brilliant effort. The former never fail; the latter often. There is good done of which we can never predicate the when or where. It lies in that invisible influence on character which he alone can read who counted the seven thousand nameless ones in Israel."

INFALLIBILITY OF THE POPE.

If the Pope is infallible why don't he say so, and be done with it? Let him dissolve his Council, and be all in all. If he is infallible now, then according to the conditions of the dogma, he has always been infallible. No decree of the Council is therefore needed to make him what he is already. And no decree of the Council can make him other than just what he is now, if he has now become infallible.

If he is infallible or he is not. If he is, it is no use for a decree on that subject by the Council defining it; for he can then himself define it infallibly, *ex cathedra*. Or if he is not, there is no power in the Council to give him infallibility, by simply defining that which he has not. The Romish Church claims to be always in all places, and under all circumstances, one and the same. According to this, it cannot change, that is it cannot add to its faith, nor take away anything that it holds at any time for faith.

All articles of faith must then be held always by all the faithful, or they cannot be saved. Until the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was promulgated, it was possible to die without believing it, and yet be saved. Now, no poor soul, who does not hold it, can be saved, though he holds for faith all that others have in former years held, who were saved. So, the infallibility of the Pope was not a dogma of faith in former years. But if once proclaimed as defined by the Council, none can forever thereafter be saved, who do not gulp it down in their creed.

The whole stupendous presumption is a climax in the Romish system, at which the world may well stand aghast.

Old Age.

"Old age is a public good. It is indeed. Don't feel sad because you are old. Whenever you are walking, no one ever opens a gate for you to pass through, no one ever honors you with any kind of help, without being himself the better for what he does; for fellow feeling with the aged ripens the soul."

A Warning.

Young men, inclined to excesses, will find a warning in the history of Theodore Clay, son of the "Great Harry," of Kentucky. He was very wild in his youth, but gave great promise in the opening of his career as a lawyer. In a short time, however, the effect of youthful excesses began to tell on his mind, and he was soon an inmate of a Lunatic Asylum, where he died recently after a residence of thirty-eight years. During the last few years of his life, Mr. Clay was a drivelling idiot. He that sows the wind, will reap the whirlwind.

Half truths are often more calumnious than whole falsehoods.

DR. LYON'S SPEECH.

In the General Assembly at Louisville on the Report of the Committee of Foreign Correspondence, to whom was committed the Overture of the Northern General Assembly proposing a Conference in regard to a friendly correspondence between the two bodies.

The Committee, it will be recollected, presented a report in favor of the appointment of a Committee of Conference, to which the Assembly gave instructions showing what the obstructions in the way of a Christian and fraternal correspondence between the two Assemblies. On the motion to adopt this report, the great debate in the Assembly took place. The Rev. Drs. Dabney, Robinson, Palmer, and others, spoke in favor of the report, and the Rev. Drs. Lyon, Ross, Rice, and others, opposed it. The following is a synopsis of Dr. Lyon's remarks:

MR. MODERATOR: I am on several accounts decidedly opposed to the adoption of the paper reported by the Committee of Foreign Correspondence, as our response to the kindly overtures from the Northern Assembly, proposing fraternal intercourse. But before I urge my objections, I beg leave to premise in the first place that it is with sincere sorrow that I feel constrained to differ with brethren so distinguished for eloquence and great ability, and who stand so high in my esteem as Drs. Dabney, Robinson and Palmer, who advocate the adoption of that Report. Indeed, those who know me best, need not be told that it is painful to me to assume an antagonistic position against anything. Conflict is not congenial to my nature, though my name is Lyon. [Laughter.] If I am a brave man (some of my friends say that I am), it is the bravery of will, not of inclination, for my whole nature shrinks from contention. Nothing but a sincere love of the truth, and a deep sense of duty impel me to engage in conflict—and especially with such opponents. If success depended upon my ability to cope with such men—I should despair. But I feel that I have truth on my side, which sooner or later will prevail.

In the next place, I trust that I may not be deemed wanting in modesty, when I say—and I say it for a defensive purpose which some of you will understand—that I yield to none in my zeal and love for the Southern Presbyterian Church, which I regard as the purest church in the world. It has been my honor and good fortune, to have associated with me, say the least, its organization and moulding as any other brother in this body, or in other borders. I speak not of influence but of actual labor. Five times in nine years I have been a member of this body. It was my privilege to assist in its original organization at Augusta, Georgia. I have been Chairman of two of its great and memorable Committees—the one that admitted the New School brethren at Charlotte, and the other that opened the door for the reception of the honored synod of Kentucky, at Nashville. I have also had the rare honor of being numbered amongst its Moderators. Besides, I am Southern, intensely Southern, in all my relations and proclivities. The darkest of sinners, extending back beyond the revolutionary war to their fountain heads in Wales and to the North of Ireland, lie in Southern soil. So that I do not permit any one to insinuate a suspicion with regard to my zeal for the honor and prosperity of my native Church in whose building up I have been, however humble, yet a chief actor. At the same time, sir, I yield to no brother in the other side of the great sea, though I think that there are as many as to the best cause I possess in the present crisis.

I repeat, in the third place, that according to my present—and in this I may be peculiarly, nevertheless I am sincere—accusations of their honest opponents for the sake of harmony and unanimity. This may be done by political assemblies and legislative bodies, but not by the courts of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the former instance, no pretensions are to be made, directed by the spirit of God, but in the latter the case is different. The Church which is the "Bible of Christ" cannot make compromises. It would be a virtual surrender from what was believed to be divine truth, which we dare not do. We constitute as a church court with prayer. We ask God for his inspiring and guiding Spirit, and we answer to the prayer we expect to find in our own hearts individually, each one, therefore, is bound to live his vote according to his inward convictions, irrespective of all other influences. This done, the voice of the whole is the voice of God. Whatever the result may be, that Providence which brings good out of evil, and causes even "the wrath of man to praise him," will cause it to redound to his own honor and glory. So that much as I would love to be in accord with my esteemed brethren in the opposition, and much as I would be delighted to see this Assemblage united, yet I cannot sacrifice my own honest convictions simply for the sake of harmony in outward action and utterance.

With these preliminary remarks now proceed, Mr. Moderator, to assign briefly some of my reasons for opposing the adoption of the Majority Report.

In the first place, Mr. Moderator, I object to the Report because it sets out with the distinct allegation that the Overture from the Northern Assembly is for "re-union," which is not the case according to our understanding of the document. The Overture expresses the "desire" that the day may not be distant when we may again be united in one great organization. But this is no proposition for "re-union" so more than the Lord's prayer, which says, "Thy kingdom, &c.," is an injunction upon all Christians to enter at once into organic re-union. It is true, sir, they express the "desire" that all who inherit and hold with them the same ancient symbols of faith, and the same forms of government and worship, and who were in former days in one organic fold, may in the course of time, be one in happy union again. But this "desire" for the future is not a proposition to us for present action. And we do not put ourselves in a false position, when we say, more over, sir, if there were any doubt with regard to the interpretation of the Overture of '69, there can be none with regard to the meaning of the present proposition to appoint a Committee of nine, to meet their Committee, charged with no other duty than that of removing obstacles that may now exist in the way of friendly and Christian intercourse between the two Assemblies. The brethren who have been sent to us solemnly declare that this is the only object of the Commission—that they do not come with propositions for organic re-union—but for friendly intercourse—and that alone. And shall we not believe them? Were not all hearts touched and made to beat with responsive affection as we listened to their words of fraternal greeting and love? Were they not sincere? Who can suspect for a moment that they were capable of presenting to us a "Grecian horse"—of coming to us with "Punic faith"—that they could make the dupes of "tricks" or "clap-trap"? Impossible! No, Mr. Moderator, these brethren beloved were infinitely above any such suspicion. I pity the man whose soul is eaten up with "suspicion." It is a cancer that eats out everything noble in a man's heart. I would rather be deceived ten times, than to harbor in my mind suspicion and hate. It is the bane of all charity. A brother that preceded me said, that if we

